



St. Christopher's C.E. Primary School

Early Years Policy

Agreed by Performance and Standards Committee: 15.11.17

To be reviewed: Nov 2020

"Children develop quickly in the early years, and early years practitioners aim to do all they can to help children have the best possible start in life. Children have a right, spelled out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, to provision which enables them to develop their personalities, talents and abilities irrespective of ethnicity, culture or religion, home language, family background, learning difficulties, disabilities or gender."

*'Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage',
Department for Education 2012.*

At St. Christopher's C.E. Primary School, we are committed to providing a high quality early years' education, which gives children a secure and confident start to their school life and nurtures a lifelong love of learning. We are fully committed to the purpose and aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework - *'Development Matters'*.

Staffing and Organisation

At St. Christopher's C.E. Primary School, we have a Nursery class and two Reception classes that each have the use of a large classroom and dedicated outdoor area. Each classroom has a carpet area and the rest of the space is organised into learning zones for the children to access. Within Nursery, there is a full time teacher and three key workers. In each Reception class, there is a full time teacher who is supported by a full time teaching assistant. Other teaching assistants may be deployed throughout Nursery and Reception based on the needs of the children.

Staff are organised to support the children in a balance of adult led and child initiated experiences throughout the day. Most sessions include free flow access to the outdoor area. Practitioners are aware of the need to be flexible in order to respond to unplanned events that the children are interested in.

Planning

The Early Learning Goals are the knowledge, skills and understanding which young children should have acquired by the time they reach the age of five.

There are three prime areas of learning:

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

In addition, there are four core areas of learning:

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

Our planning has a sharp focus on the children's needs, their interests and their stages of development. We recognise that the seven areas of learning cannot be delivered in isolation and seek opportunities to make links between them. We aim to deliver the curriculum through planned, purposeful play and present new concepts in meaningful contexts that enable the children to build on what they already know.

Long Term Planning

Our long term planning shows our aims and values, demonstrates how our continuous provision meets the EYFS requirements and promotes learning within the areas of learning and development, tracks the learning objectives that have been covered and highlights any key events to be included.

Medium Term Planning

At St. Christopher's C.E. Primary School, we deliver a creative curriculum, which is based around a new topic each half term. Medium term planning shows the key learning experiences for each area of the curriculum.

Practitioners use this flexibly, choosing learning experiences to meet the needs of the children. At the beginning of each topic, practitioners lead the children in discussion to identify areas that they are particularly interested in. These ideas are incorporated into the medium term plan.

Short Term Planning

Short term planning shows the learning opportunities that will be available over the week. It includes differentiated adult led experiences for all curriculum areas, as well as showing how the learning environment will be enhanced in response to the previous week's observations and assessment of the children.

Effective Teaching and Learning

We encourage the children to play an active role in shaping their learning experiences. Adults engage in discussion with the children about what they are interested in, which skills they would like to develop further and which resources they need to support their learning. Each term, the children look at and discuss their Special books as part of a "Learning Review".

We aim to provide an attractive, challenging learning environment that offers high quality opportunities for the children to learn through play, both indoors and outdoors. There is a range of "continuous provision" available in the classroom, that is designed to offer open-ended, practical learning opportunities. Children are supported to think creatively and imaginatively and explore how resources can be adapted. Each week, the provision is enhanced with additional resources, based on the previous week's observations.

Adult led activities are practical in nature and based on first hand experiences wherever possible. The children are supported to develop problem-solving skills through open-ended tasks and opportunities to share their thinking with others. The number of adult led activities that the children take part in increases throughout the year, as their concentration develops.

Observation and Assessment

At St. Christopher's C.E. Primary School, we use a range of strategies to gather information about the children's learning and development and use this information to ensure that our planning meets the needs of all learners. During child initiated activities, practitioners make 'snapshot' observations on post it notes. Notes about guided activities are recorded on class record sheets. In addition, each child is the focus of a long observation at least once a term and has targeted experiences planned for them the following week. Each child has a 'Special Book' and all observations are gathered here along with examples of work and parental contributions.

From the first half of the Autumn term onwards, the Reception teachers use their knowledge of each child to decide which band of 'Development Matters' they are working on in each area of the curriculum. This allows learning opportunities to be pitched appropriately and also provides a

baseline of the children's attainment. This information is closely monitored to ensure that all children are making good progress.

In the Summer term, practitioners consider the 17 ELGS in the EYFS Profile to decide whether each child is working at the expected levels, exceeding the levels or have not yet met the levels. Judgements against the ELGs are based on ongoing observation; all relevant records; discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution.

The results of the Profile are shared with parents and/or carers, and there are opportunities for them to meet their child's class teacher to discuss this information.

At the end of the year, Year 1 teachers are given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities in relation to the three key characteristics of effective learning. This helps to create a smooth transition and assists with the planning of activities in Year 1.

The EYFS profile results are reported to the local authority, who monitor and moderate the judgements made.

Working in Partnership

We recognise that children may access EYFS provision through other providers throughout the week and that all providers have an equally important role to play in their early years experiences. We seek information about the other settings that our children attend so that we can establish communication about their learning and development.

Learning Environment

We aim to create an attractive, welcoming and stimulating learning environment which will encourage children to explore, investigate and learn through first hand experience. Resources are clearly labeled and organised into learning zones, enabling the children to access them with a high level of independence. Practitioners regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the learning zones and make adaptations as necessary.

Parent Partnerships

We value the contribution that our parents and carers make to their child's learning and take every opportunity to work in collaboration with them. Each half term, we publish a newsletter to inform parents of what their child will be learning and how they can support them at home. In the Autumn and Spring terms we hold parents' consultations and in the Summer term we send home detailed reports. There are regular opportunities for parents to view their child's Special Books. We welcome contributions from home and provide 'wow' sheets for parents and carers to complete. The children take reading books home to share, as well as, homework tasks once a week. Throughout the year, there are parent's meetings and open mornings where parents can find out how their child learns in school.

Community Links and the Wider World

Over the year, we arrange visits from members of the local community to support our topic work. The children take part in several educational visits linked to their topic work. Film clips, non-fiction texts and artefacts are also used to introduce new concepts in real-life contexts. We aim to develop the children's awareness of other cultures by exploring different countries and celebrations.

Behaviour Management

We follow a simplified version of St. Christopher's Primary school's whole school behaviour policy. Children start each day, with their picture on the 'I am making good choices' cloud, as they progress through the day, if they are consistently making good choices they will be moved up to the 'I have made fantastic choices' cloud. However, if children have made poor choices they will be moved down onto the 'I have not made good choices' cloud.

Alongside our behaviour system, children's good behaviour is consistently encouraged and rewarded through positive praise, encouragement and on occasion the use of stickers.

Safeguarding

All staff consistently adhere to St. Christopher's Primary school's 'Safeguarding Children' policy.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

We have a responsibility to ensure positive attitudes to diversity and difference. We can support each child's needs by:

- removing or helping to overcome barriers where these already exist;
 - being alert to the early signs of needs that could later lead to difficulties and responding quickly and appropriately, involving other agencies as required;
 - stretching and challenging all children.

Please refer to the school's 'Equality of Opportunities', 'SEN' and 'A, G and T' policies.

Premises and Security

The school can be accessed through the several external school doors, which are kept secured at all times. Staff use an electronic key to gain access to the building and sign in and out as they enter the school premises. The office staff are responsible for verifying the identity of any visitors before they enter school. Visitors are asked to sign in to the school visitor's log and are given a visitor sticker to wear. Staff are aware of their role in challenging anyone who is not recognized and asking for identification from anyone claiming to be from an outside agency.

The external classroom doors gates are kept locked, except when the children enter and leave the setting at the beginning and end of their sessions. The gate to the staff car park is kept locked apart from when the children enter and leave at each end of the school day.

The external doors are closely monitored by staff when children are entering or leaving the setting, to ensure that they cannot leave unaccompanied. All staff are aware of the need to monitor the external doors to ensure that they are secure during the session. The register is used to check how many children are present. When moving from one area of school to another, head counts are used to check that all children are present before leaving.

Arrival and Collection of Children

Children can enter their Reception classes from 8:30 until registers close at 8.50. Children can enter Nursery from 8.45 for the morning session and 12.00 for the afternoon session. Each child is marked in on the day's register by the class teacher. Parents/carers use the external classroom doors when collecting their children at the end of the school day. If a child needs to be collected during the school day, parents report to the school office.

Parents are required to inform the school if anyone different is collecting their child at the end of the day. If there are queries regarding a child's collection, the class teacher will contact the child's parent/guardian to discuss the situation with them.

If a child is not collected and the parent/guardian is uncontactable, the other names on the child's registration form will be called to collect the child. If no-one on the child's registration form is contactable by 4.30 pm, a member of senior management should telephone the Social Services Duty Officer or Out of Hours Duty Point. Arrangements should then be made for the child to be removed to an appropriate place of protection agreed by the Social Services Department. It remains the responsibility of the Social Services Department in conjunction with the Police to contact the parents and if appropriate, to inform them of their child's whereabouts.

Missing Child

If a child disappears during the school day, practitioners will; check with all members of staff when the child was last seen and that they have not been collected by a parent/carer, organize a thorough and systematic search of the building and surrounding playground etc, inform the head teacher of the situation and telephone the child's parents or other emergency contact to explain the situation and double check that the child is not there or their whereabouts known. If the child is still unable to be located, the school will notify the police of a missing person.

Outings

Written parental permission to take the children into the local environment is sought upon admission to the school. Further permission is obtained for any other outings. Risk assessments are completed for each type of outing.

Key Person Approach

The class teacher is responsible for the well being of all of the children in both the Nursery and Reception classes. In addition, each child is assigned a 'key person' who may be the teacher or a teaching assistant. Parents are informed of who their child's key person is and receive information about their role.

The key person's responsibilities include:

- helping the child to become familiar with the setting
- building a relationship with each child's parents, working in partnership with them to ensure that the child is being cared for appropriately for each family.
 - responding sensitively to the child's needs, feelings, ideas and behaviour.
- ensuring that the learning opportunities on offer meet the needs of each child.

Promoting Awareness of Dangers and How to Stay Safe

We encourage the children to take an active role in ensuring their own safety and involve them in discussions about health and safety issues. The school follows the 'Jigsaw' PSHE programme, which encourages children to think about who can help them in different situations.

Risk Assessments

In addition to the school's risk assessment, risk assessments are completed within the Foundation Stage to ensure that any hazards are identified and managed before the children enter the learning environment.

Complaints

If parents/carers have any concerns or complaints they are initially dealt with by the class teacher, who will then liaise with the Foundation Stage co-ordinator if necessary. In the case of the Foundation Stage co-ordinator being unable to resolve the situation then further guidance from the senior management team will be sought.

Information for Parents and Carers

We provide a pack for new parents and carers that includes information about our daily routines, the types of activities provided, staffing and food and drink.

Transition from Nursery to Reception

We work closely with our Nursery to ensure that the children make a smooth transition into their Reception classes.

We hold a transition meeting for new parents in the Summer term, where we outline daily routines and expectations. Children are able to visit their new class during Oxfordshire's transition day.

The children start Reception full time from September. Routines such as assemblies and playtimes are built up gradually, with support from the children's key person.

Before children enter Nursery, our Nursery teacher and home school worker visit the children within their home settings. They are then invited to attend a taster session with their parents/carers.

Transition from Reception to Year One

In the Summer term, we begin a programme of transition to support the children with their move to Year One. This involves visits to the Year One classroom, walks to look at where they will enter school and opportunities to ask any questions about the next year. Furthermore, children are able to visit their new class during Oxfordshire's transition day.

Being Active

The children have access to an outdoor area, which provides a range of physical activities; including soft play blocks, large balls, bats and balls, as well as a climbing frame. Furthermore, our Reception children take part in a weekly PE session.

Food and Drink

We provide a daily 'snack time', where children are provided with fruit and a choice of water or milk. Children are supported to wash their hands with soap before selecting a snack and pouring their own drink. Fresh drinking water is available at all times and in hot weather, it is also provided in a seated location in the outdoor area.

Illnesses and Injuries

Parents and carers are asked not to send their child to school if they are unwell and to inform the school office of their absence. Parents/carers are asked to inform staff if their child is suffering from a minor ailment so that appropriate care can be given. Children must not return to school within 48 hours of a bout of sickness or diarrhea.

If a child becomes unwell whilst at school, a member of staff will:

- phone the parents/carers, explain that their child is unwell, explain the symptoms noted and ask them to collect their child.
- sit with the child in a quiet place away from other children, if possible, until the parents arrive.
- if the child has had sickness or diarrhea, explain the policy of at least a 48 hour clearance of either symptom before the child may return.

Advice relating to notifiable diseases is displayed in the school office.

In the case of an injury, appropriate first aid will be administered by a qualified first aider. A first aid kit is kept in the Reception classroom and its contents are in accordance with advice from the Health and Safety Executive and the Community Health Physician. First aid cover is provided at playtimes and lunchtimes. All accidents are recorded in one of the school's accident books and signed by the member of staff who dealt with the incident. The staff member dealing with the incident is responsible for completing an accident slip and this is sent home with the child at the end of the day. Parents/carers may be contacted by telephone to inform them of an injury if deemed necessary.

We ask for written parental consent to seek any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment in the future when the children are admitted to school. In the case of a more serious accident to a child, the practitioner/school will contact the parent/guardian to agree a course of action if time permits. If the parent/guardian cannot be contacted the practitioner/school will seek appropriate medical attention or treatment for the child. The child should not be given anything to eat or drink. If a child or adult needs to be transported to hospital, depending on the medical emergency, an ambulance may be called or parents will be asked to take their child to seek further medical advice.

Medicines

Only drugs/medicines prescribed by a registered Medical Practitioner will be administered to children. Parents should complete and hand in a Medication Consent Form, along with medicine, to a member of staff. Drugs/medicines must only be administered to the child for whom they are prescribed and all drugs/medicines must be kept in the original container stating whom they are prescribed for and dosage information. Unwanted or unused medicines must be returned to the parent for disposal. A record of the drugs given should be made indicating the time, dosage and signed by the person administering the dose. The child's parent should sign this each day that medicine is given.

Training for prescribed medication that is invasive i.e. EPIPENS etc is available via the school nurse. If an individual child requires a care plan, this will be drawn up in partnership with parents and the school nurse.